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NEWS

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NLM To Provide Audiovisual Aids

Dr. Martin M. Cummings, NLM Director, has announced that the Library, in cooperation with the Public Health Service Audiovisual Facility and the Communicable Disease Center, Atlanta, is broadening its audiovisual collection and is developing facilities to enable medical researchers, practitioners, and educators to use this form of medical information.

As part of the first phase of the program, a new Audiovisual Carrel has been established in the Library's Main Reading Room. The carrel is equipped with two 8-mm Fairchild Mark IV rear-screen motion picture projectors, with earphones for individual use. The projectors accommodate a core collection of sound films which are mounted in cartridges and shelved in the carrel for direct user access.

The films were produced during the past two years in a "Single Concept Film Series" by the CDC and the PHS Audiovisual Facility. Subjects range from hemoglobin determination and rabies F-A staining (in a subseries on microbiological techniques) to "Physiological Manifestations of Emphysema." Although the size of the film collection is relatively small, NLM will attempt to acquire all teaching films related to medicine for use in this new facility.

Access to these films is provided by cards filed under subject and producer in the NLM Public Catalog and in a separate catalog maintained in the carrel. The films are also listed in the *NLM Current Catalog* as they are acquired.

Plans are being made to include other audiovisual media and appropriate hardware. The Library hopes eventually to establish a well-rounded basic collection of 35-mm slides, 8-mm and 16-mm films, film strips, records, and audio and television tapes, and other programmed learning resources that will be available to individual users through a central audiovisual service center. This center would be a prototype facility to serve as a demonstration unit for evaluation by other medical libraries.

Two NLM Regents Named to Presidential Commission

Dr. William N. Hubbard, Jr., Dean, University of Michigan Medical School and Chairman of the NLM Board of Regents, and Herman H. Fussler, Ph.D., Director, University of Chicago Library, and a member of the NLM Board of Regents, have been appointed by the President to serve on the new National Advisory Commission on Libraries.

The President also named Estelle Brodman, Ph.D., Librarian and Professor of Medical History, Washington University School of Medicine, to the 14-member Commission. Dr. Brodman, a past president of the Medical Library Association, was formerly head of NLM's Reference Services.

In making the appointments, the President said: "I have asked the Commission to appraise the role and adequacy of our libraries, now and in the future, as sources for scholarly research, as centers for the distribution of knowledge, and as links in our Nation's rapidly evolving communications networks."

Dr. Douglas M. Knight, President of Duke University, was named Chairman of the Commission. Other members are: Verner Clapp, President, Council on Library Resources; Carl Overhage, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Theodore Waller, President, Teaching Materials Corporation; Wilbur Schramm, Director, Institute for Communication Research, Stanford University; Launor Carter, Senior Vice President, Systems Development Corporation; Caryl P. Haskins, President, Carnegie Institution; Alvin Eurich, President, Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies; Stephen Wright, former President of Fisk University; Harry Ransom, Chancellor, University of Texas; and Carl Elliott, former Congressman from Alabama.

New Deputy Chief of HMD to Direct Oral History Program

Dr. Olch

Peter D. Olch, M.D., has been appointed Deputy Chief of the History of Medicine Division. Dr. Olch, who served at NLM as Special Assistant to the Director in 1964-65, returned to the Library on September 1 after completing one year as a Fellow of the Institute of the History of Medicine, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

Dr. Olch's new responsibilities will include the direction of HMD's Oral History Program (see *NLM News*, July 1966). Tentatively, the program will consist of two main activities:

tape-recorded interviews with outstanding individuals in medicine and related sciences; and intensive study of a single, relatively broad area of medicine. One goal of the program is the establishment of a union catalog of oral records in the biomedical sciences.

Last month, Dr. Olch attended an Oral History Colloquium at the University of California in Los Angeles. The meeting, he said, emphasized the importance of tape recordings and other audio materials as a vital supplement to written records. Oral history techniques, Dr. Olch pointed out, can lend a new dimension of reality and immediacy to existing documentary resources.

Dr. Olch received his M.D. degree from Johns Hopkins in 1955, completed his surgical internship there the following year, and became a Commissioned Officer in the Public Health Service in 1956. After five years' post-graduate training in surgery and four years in pathology, he joined the staff of the NLM. He is Board-certified in pathology and is a member of a number of professional societies, including the American Association for Cancer Research, the American Association for the History of Medicine, the College of American Pathologists, the American Society of Clinical Pathologists, and the Halsted Society.

NLM PROGRAM REPORT NO. 3 - MEDLARS EVALUATION PROJECT

by F. Wilfrid Lancaster
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Mr. Lancaster

In an effort to refine and improve MEDLARS services to the biomedical community, the Library has initiated a new project designed to provide data on the usefulness of demand search bibliographies. This project is believed to represent the first extensive study of a large-scale operating information system.

The evaluation is based on two measurements: "recall," or the proportion of useful citations in MEDLARS actually retrieved; and "precision," the ability to withhold citations to non-relevant documents.

To measure "recall," it is necessary to compile a list of relevant documents by some means other than MEDLARS. This is done, first, by having the recipient of a demand search list all citations already known to him; and, second, by conducting a manual search of the literature, using reference tools, such as *Science Citation Index*, not generated by NLM. The recipient assesses the citations identified by the manual search. Those which he finds relevant, plus the ones he originally suggested, constitute the recall base.

"Precision" is measured by having the recipient of a demand search examine photocopies of journal articles selected at random from the search output to determine their relevancy.

The Library plans to base the study on 400 test requests from 20 cooperating user groups. The study will provide valuable information on the quality of responses to different kinds of requests--according to subject areas, type of requesting organization, etc.--and will suggest how the system can best interact with users to ensure maximum efficiency and service.

Bibliography of the History of Medicine

A new NLM publication, *Bibliography of the History of Medicine*, No. 1, 1965, now in press, is scheduled to appear in November. The *Bibliography* has been planned as an annual series, with five-year cumulations. Its scope includes medicine and related professions, sciences, and institutions. The first issue will cite only journal articles and monographs. Future issues will be expanded to cover analytical entries, symposia, and *Festschriften*.

The 299-page *Bibliography* is divided into three parts: a Biographical Section, subdivided into (1) physicians and scientists and (2) famous persons; a Subject Section, with chronological and geographical subheadings; and an Author Section.

Copies of the *Bibliography of the History of Medicine* may be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Price: $1.75 each.

New Illustrated Pamphlet Describes NLM

Additional copies of the enclosed pamphlet, *National Library of Medicine*, are available on request to the Assistant to the Director, National Library of Medicine, 8600 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Maryland 20014.

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- LIBRARY COMMISSION
- MEDLARS EVALUATION PROJECT